



**School Safety and Security Stakeholder Group
Jan. 24, 2013 Meeting Summary**

Present:

Matt McCarter, Director, Student Engagement & Postsecondary Readiness, SDE
Brian Armes, Principal- Mountain Valley Elementary Bonneville SD
Guy Bliesner, Health, Safety & Security Coordinator- Bonneville SD
Anita Christenson, Principal- Park Ridge Elementary
Susan Fletcher, ISBA Board Member / trustee American Falls
Jackie Frey, (IEMA) Coordinator, Twin Falls Co. Dept. of Emergency Services
Samuel Hulse, Captain, Bonneville County Sheriff Idaho Falls
Vicki Johnson, Federal Programs Director / former Counselor, Blackfoot S.D.
Steve Keys, Deputy Administrator of Operations, Division of Building Safety
Mike Munger, Safety & Security Specialist, Boise SD
Steve Steiner, Branch Chief, Bureau of Homeland Security
Heidi Novich, Community Volunteer and Special Programs Planner, Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
Gaylen Smyer, Superintendent, Cassia Joint SD
George Stevens, Sergeant, Boise Police Dept.
Sandy VonBehren, IEMA President
Todd Zucker, Vice Principal, Weiser High School
Doreen Hayes, Administrative Assistance, State Department of Education
Representative Wendy Horman, House Education Committee

Discussion Agreements:

- Actively Participate
- Seek to understand
- Practice Respectful Discourse
- Keep eyes on the Prize (maintain focus on topic at hand)
- Name the Elephant (no sacred cows)

Identified attributes of safe and secure school environments in Idaho (what is our desired future)?

- Student safety is a demonstrated priority.
- Everyone in building has situational awareness – identification if something is out of place and knowledge of what to do about it (reporting protocols / immediate safety measures, etc...).
- Students engender a responsibility to alert a trusted adult of perceived threats.

- Adults in schools actively cultivate trusting relationships with students that increase the likelihood that warning signs of students in crisis or intent on doing harm are communicated and timely interventions are conducted.
- Violence prevention programs are robust and ongoing (peaceful conflict resolution, restorative justice practices, alternatives to suspension / expulsion, Positive Behavior Intervention Supports, etc...).
- Adults in schools treat each other with the same level of respect that is expected of students.
- Teachers and staff have the authority and ability to make independent decisions in a crisis in the absence of an activated emergency operations plan.
- Communities and parents are actively engaged in school safety.
- Simple protocols and uniformity in responding to any hazard / crisis exists throughout the state.
- All schools have clear policy and procedures that are operationally practiced with sufficient frequency.
- A statewide security plan based on best practice is in place and contributes to uniformity across the state (decrease need for staff transferring to learn new protocols).
- A fixed and mobile communication plan among schools and first responders is in place throughout the state (Emergency Operation Centers / BHS).
- Atmosphere of mutual respect between students and staff is commonplace.
- Environment – teachers have skills and knowledge to know what to do - feel comfortable and that the students are #1 life priority.
- Schools in remote areas have the training to secure and defend while first responders are in route.
- Solutions must be sustainable – establish and maintain through time.
- A balanced approach between safety and a welcoming school environment must be struck.
- A culture of readiness to respond exists in every school in Idaho.

What are current barriers to security / safety in Idaho schools?

- Disparate levels of safe and functional facilities / structures / equipment throughout the state.
- Lack of communication within buildings (classrooms to central office) and between schools and first responders.
- Lack of knowledge / partnerships around existing community resources (emergency services / law enforcement, EMT, etc...).
- Lack of demonstrated commitment to school safety (communication systems in disrepair, lack of policy / protocol, failure to train on and follow policy & protocol).
- Absence of ownership at the local level- nobody 'owns' the issue of school security.
- Lack of expertise among many schools and districts throughout the state.
- Pervasive complacency exists, 'it can't happen here' syndrome.
- Lack of standardized approaches throughout the state / district.
- Societal norms (popular culture, media) contributes to, and normalizes, violent conflict resolution.

- Lack of sufficient mental health services for struggling individuals within schools and communities exists.
- Politics contribute to well intentioned, but destructive policy (weapons on campus). What is needed is more expertise, not weapons.
- Staff turnover disrupts uniform responses to critical incidents.
- Lack of knowledge regarding likely vulnerabilities / threat assessment.
- A minimum standard of security has not been established for Idaho schools.
- A lack of resources to address critical infrastructure, equipment and training needs hampers readiness.
- Community apathy regarding school safety is the norm- security is inconvenient, buy in is required.
- Access control- many principals cannot secure their buildings and struggle to control who walks in the building.

Where are we now?

- School safety assessment from 2007.
- Educator's Guide to security.
- School safety continuum- low to high cost solutions for common security measures.
- NIMS / ICS guide for emergency operations planning.
- Educator's guide to purchasing security equipment.
- ***Known data regarding school safety indicates wide ranging levels of school crises prevention, preparedness, planning, training, facility safety, security equipment and access control.***

Next steps to increase school security in Idaho

- Local trustees can authorize individuals to carry weapons on campus under current statute and is sufficient- allows for local discussion and decision making.
 - Allowing anyone to carry on campus with a concealed permit without notifying administration creates a significant risk.
 - First responder confusion regarding intruder with multiple weapons drawn
 - Building leaders lose control regarding who is carrying and who is not
 - Complicates rules of engagement
 - Diminishes local control
 - Implication of state liability vs local board liability
 - Recommendation- establish requirements (training, background check, etc...) for those who trustees authorize to carry- deputize.
 - Research state models for weapons on campus.
- Establish a statewide plan for school safety (common threat assessment, training schedule and topics, uniform practices, baseline of prevention programs and safety equipment in place).
- Incentivize(?) adoption of statewide school safety plan components.
- Model for Idaho: Texas Center for School Safety <http://www.txssc.txstate.edu/K12/safety-audits> (establish an Idaho Ctr for School Safety).

- Repository for best practices
- Provides resources and training for the entire state- enables smaller districts with limited staff to develop and train
- University Based- connected to higher education; capitalize on internships, data and research. Increased credibility for educators.
- Allows for differentiated training among schools.
- Enables delivery model for Professional Development (CEU).
- Decreases burden on districts if school safety training requirements are enacted.
- Allow for consistent implementation of statewide plans (threat assessment, communication tools and protocols, etc...)
- Require an annual threat assessment (based on a common tool), compile data and create / publish school safety report cards.
- Connect schools to Idaho Emergency Operation Centers through BHS.
 - Leveraged resource- minimizes cost due to existing infrastructure
 - Establishes a common communication network connecting schools with law enforcement and first responders
- Require school safety training for teacher / administrator recertification.
- Include crisis response preparedness indicators in teacher & principal evaluations.
- Fire Marshall Idea model- 'Police / Security Marshall' could serve as inspector of school vulnerabilities similar to Fire Marshal inspection of fire safety codes.
- Add to BHS practice of visiting every school and include a school safety check.
- Establish mental health SWAT teams for school interventions for students in crisis.
- Reformat Safe and Drug Free Schools Fund requirements and allowable expenditures to include security equipment if fund is reinstated as dedicated.
- Establish robust new school safety construction requirements or recommendations.
- Explore flexibility around IDEA & Due Process / IEP students to allow for individualized responses to behavior violations.
- Explore title funding flexibility regarding security equipment / training personnel expenditures.
- Craft a public awareness campaign to increase community interest and support for school safety.
- Inform media entities of appropriate reporting of school crises events.
- Prioritize school safety at the same level as academic performance- include safety ratings in 5 star rating system.
- Establish descriptors / examples of SDFS incidents to increase accuracy and consistency for reporting in ISEE.

(Jeanne Buschine, Meridian S.D.)

- *Allow for flexibility in the Uniform Fire Code to allow districts to substitute a required monthly fire drill with other drills (2-3 different drills per year).*
- *Expand the number of staff trained in CPR (requirement?).*
- *Compel / require(?) parents to attend ED / PBI interventions.*

Next Steps

- Research/ summarize research, best practices and other state models.
- Flush out recommendations for districts authorizing individuals to carry weapons on campus.
- Assess dates for upcoming meetings.
- Include H&W Behavioral Health (Ross Edmunds?) and PTA representative.
- Define rules of engagement for statewide approach.
- Update school safety continuum and educator's guide to security equipment.